



A bank of electronic headway recorders keeps a close check on all streetcars and trolley coaches.

CARS IN COACH ZONE PRESENT HAZARD

More than 400 tickets a week are issued to thoughtless motorists who do not realize that parking in a coach zone is not only an inconvenience to dozens of people on the coach but can be a definite safety hazard when the driver is forced to let his passengers on or off in the middle of the street.

Keeping a large-scale transit system like the San Francisco Municipal Railway running smoothly is a tough proposition, take it from Inspector Wilson and his staff,

"Operating 1,000 vehicles over 75 lines and carrying daily the total population of San Francisco is a difficult, complicated job. I'm proud of the work the men in Central Control are doing and I hope, in a small way, we're helping you folks who ride our busses and streetcars to enjoy a safer, more comfortable ride."

If you would like to see the Central Control Room "in person," either singly or in groups, may we extend a cordial invitation to visit us? Please call first so that arrangements can be made. The number is FI 6-5656. And if you have found this information concerning your transit system of interest may we ask you to pass it on to a friend? Thank you!

SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL RAILWAY

KMA 672 CALLING!



Just about everybody is familiar with the old schoolbook theorem about a "straight line being the shortest distance between two points."

When that straight line appears on one of the electronic headway recorders in the Municipal Railway's Central Control Room, however, it not only means the long way 'round for some stalled trolley coach or streetcar but trouble for Hobart Wilson, the Railway's Chief Inspector and trouble shooter.

A ROOM FULL OF EQUIPMENT

"Central Control" is a small office at the Railway's main headquarters at Geary and Presidio Avenue. It looks something like a compact radio station and is filled with all sorts of complicated gadgets like message relaying equipment, microphones, police radio, transmitters, telephones, maps, time tables, and—Hobart Wilson and three assistants, who, between them, maintain a 20-hour shift from 6:00 a.m. until two in the morning.

In short, Central Control is the nerve center of the Municipal Railway.



Over 350 routine and emergency messages a day are handled by Central Control's staff.

Through this busy office flow the more than 10,000 messages a month which keep the far spread operation of the Railway functioning as a coordinated whole.

RECORDERS ON ROUND-THE-CLOCK DUTY

The headway recorders, mentioned previously, are rather complex devices that electronically record the operation and progress of any one of the 125 streetcars and 335 trolley coaches throughout the city. In outward appearance, the recorders consist of four revolving cylinders inscribed with pinpoint marks, each indicating a fixed point on overhead trolley lines.

As a streetcar or trolley coach passes a given point, it makes an electrical contact, sending a signal to Central Control, the signal being recorded as a slight jog in the smooth pen line on the revolving chart.

That's why when the line is straight it means trouble ahead—something has interrupted the smooth flow of service on that line. A message is immediately flashed to one of the 10 Inspectors in radio controlled cars constantly patrolling the city, who moves in fast on the situation and takes whatever actions he thinks is necessary.

THIRTY MOBILE UNITS IN RADIO CONTACT

In addition to the 10 Inspectors in radio patrol cars covering assigned areas of the city, 50 other Field Inspectors remain at more or less fixed stations and report in hourly to headquarters. Twenty other mobile units, such as claims cars, wreckers, line trucks and officials' cars, are also in radio contact with Central Control.

A powerful transmitter high atop Twin Peaks provides ample coverage for the Railway's two-way radio installation. Call letters, assigned by the Federal Communications Commission to Central Control's transmitting station, are KMA-672. A code number system, similar to that used by the Police Department, is used to cover the most common reports and orders. In addition, a close check is maintained of all special Police calls that might possibly affect Railway service.

INSPECTORS HANDLE MANY ASSIGNMENTS

Besides their main duty of maintaining service as close as possible to published schedules, Muni Inspectors are responsible for switching equipment when unexpected delays occur on the line; to make minor repairs necessary to keep vehicles in service; to estimate extra service that will be required to handle a large public gathering such as a symphony at the Opera House or a baseball game at Seals Stadium; to investigate and help in any way possible if an accident occurs involving Railway equipment, and, as Special Police Officers, to issue traffic citations for violations which interfere with the operation of streetcars and coaches.



Inspector Wilson